



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

November 6, 1997

S. 1213 **Oceans Act of 1997**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on November 4, 1997*

SUMMARY

The stated purpose of S. 1213 is to develop and maintain a coordinated, comprehensive, and long-range national policy with respect to ocean and coastal activities. The bill would repeal and take the place of the Marine Resources and Engineering Development Act of 1966. S. 1213 would:

- establish a Commission on Ocean Policy that would examine current ocean and coastal activities and recommend policies for exploring, protecting, and using coastal and ocean resources;
- authorize total appropriations of \$6 million for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the commission; and
- establish a National Ocean Council to advise the President and serve as a forum for developing and implementing an ocean and coastal policy. The council would be made up of federal officials. Federal agencies and departments that are represented on the council would detail employees to the council as needed.

CBO estimates that implementing S. 1213 would result in new spending of \$7 million over the 1998-2002 period, assuming the appropriation of the amounts authorized and estimated to be authorized by the bill. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) and would not significantly affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

CBO estimates that implementing S. 1213 would result in new spending subject to appropriation of about \$1 million in fiscal year 1998, \$3 million in fiscal year 1999, \$2 million in fiscal year 2000, and less than \$500,000 a year thereafter. No amounts were appropriated in fiscal year 1997 pursuant to the statute that S. 1213 would replace. (Similarly, no amounts are included in the House or Senate-passed versions of the bills making appropriations for 1998.) The estimated budgetary impact of S. 1213 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Estimated Authorization Level	3	3	a	a	a
Estimated Outlays	1	3	2	a	a

a. Less than \$500,000.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill is enacted in the next few months and that all amounts authorized or estimated to be authorized are appropriated.

Commission. S. 1213 would authorize the appropriation of \$6 million for the commission; the estimate assumes that the amount would be appropriated in equal installments in 1998 and 1999. CBO anticipates that spending by the commission would be slow initially (not more than \$1 million in 1998), as the President would have up to 3 months after enactment of the bill to select its members, and it would take time for the work of the commission to get under way. The commission would report to the President and the Congress with its finding and recommendations for a comprehensive national ocean and coastal policy within 18 months. We anticipate that the report would be completed in fiscal year 2000. Each member of the 16-member commission who is not an officer or employee of the federal government, or whose compensation is not precluded by a state, local, or tribal government, would receive compensation. The commission also would be able to hire additional paid staff.

Council. S. 1213 does not authorize appropriations for the proposed council. However, CBO estimates that requiring federal officials to serve on the council and detailing federal employees to work with the council would result in additional costs to the affected agencies of less than \$500,000 a year beginning in fiscal year 1998, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. CBO estimates that the total cost of the council over the 1998-2002 period would be about \$1 million.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would not significantly affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

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